OLE IMMANUEL FRANKSEN, *H. C. Ørsted—a man of the two cultures*. Foreword by Vagn Andersen. Birkerød: Strandbergs Forlag, 1981. 49 pp. No price given.

This slim volume is a tribute by the firm of Bang & Olufsen to the discoverer of electromagnetism. Although its author scarcely succeeds in his goal of exhibiting Ørsted as a builder of bridges between science and art, he does provide a modest sketch of Ørsted's connections with literary figures, philosophers, the government, and the universities. Similarly brief is his synopsis of Ørsted's wide-ranging activities, which included educational and institutional reform—in particular, the social diffusion of science through popularization and science-based engineering—and the purification of the Danish language.

The book offers little of substance, and any desire for a serious assessment of Ørsted's philosophy or science or scientific contacts will go unfilfilled. Franksen does consider some of the important conceptual affinities and differences between Ørsted and Davy, Faraday and Ampère, and briefly explores the challenge Ørsted's discovery presented to the Newtonian force paradigm. Ørsted argued against Ampère's reduction of electromagnetism to the electrodynamics of electric currents (with magnets seen as a configuration of molecular current loops) on the grounds that (in Franksen's words) 'his own manifest observation of the vortical patterns around the electric conductor had been substituted [read: replaced] by a conjecture unfounded in experimental evidence' (p. 31). Ørsted shared the belief of many of his contemporaries that certain complex theoretical questions could be answered clearly and decisively on the basis of a simple 'fundamental experiment'.

The book includes a facsimile of Ørsted's four page Latin pamphlet of 1820, 'Experimenta circa effectum conflictus electrici in acum magneticam', and reprints without emendation its inadequate contemporary translation from the *Annals of Philosophy*. There are generous quotations from primary sources and a seven item bibliography, but no footnotes.

K. L. CANEVA, *Department of History, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina 27412, U.S.A.*